

Message Text

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C O N F I D E N T I A L PEKING 2157

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: OVIP (FORD, GERALD)

SUBJECT: PRESIDENT'S VISIT: PRESS ARRANGEMENTS

1. WE SHOULD BE THINKING NOW ABOUT HOW WE WILL HANDLE ACCESS FOR PEKING-BASED FOREIGN CORRESPONDENTS DURING THE PRESIDENT'S VISIT. MANY OF THESE CORRESPONDENTS HAVE BEEN VERY COOPERATIVE WITH USLO AND WE VALUE THEM AS IMPORTANT CONTACTS. IN THE ABSENCE OF AMERICAN CORRESPONDENTS, SOME ALSO HAVE VERY WIDE READERSHIP IN THE UNITED STATES AND THUS FEEL A STRONG OBLIGATION TO REPORT THE VISIT IN DETAIL.

2. DURING PRESIDENT NIXON'S 1972 VISIT, MOST OF THE WESTERN PRESS, AT LEAST, HAD ACCESS EQUIVALENT TO THE AMERICAN PRESS PARTY AND SOME FLEW IN THE PRESS PARTY AIRCRAFT TO SHANGHAI. DURING THE LAST TWO VISITS BY THE SECRETARY, THEY DID NOT HAVE AS MUCH ACCESS AS THE TRAVELING PRESS PARTY AND THERE WERE NO FORMAL PRESS BRIEFINGS FOR THEM TO ATTEND. DURING VISITS BY OTHER CHIEFS OF STATE, THE PATTERN HAS VARIED, BUT THE CHINESE HAVE GENERALLY BEEN WILLING TO CONFORM TO THE PREFERENCES OF THE FOREIGN GUEST.

3. THE MOST SATISFACTORY SOLUTION FROM OUR POINT OF VIEW WOULD BE TO ALLOW PEKING CORRESPONDENTS OF ALL COUNTRIES WITH WHICH WE HAVE RELATIONS (A TOTAL OF 39) TO ATTEND PRESS BRIEFINGS, ACCOMPANY EXCURSIONS, ETC
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ALONG WITH THE AMERICAN PRESS PARTY. WE WOULD EXPECT

BETWEEN TWENTY AND THIRTY OF THEM TO ATTEMPT TO COVER THE VISIT FULL TIME. IF NECESSARY, WE COULD LIMIT ACCESS FOR PEKING BASED CORRESPONDENTS TO SOME EVENTS TO THE WESTERN PRESS ONLY. AS A LAST RESORT--AND THIS WOULD CONSIDERABLY COMPLICATE OUR LIVES--WE COULD CUT THE LIST DOWN TO A SELECT FEW. THE PEKING-BASED CORRESPONDENTS SHOULD ALSO BE ALLOWED TO PARTICIPATE IN POOL ARRANGEMENTS ALONG WITH THE AMERICAN PRESS WHEN THESE ARE NECESSARY.

4. WE WOULD APPRECIATE HAVING PARTY'S VIEWS ON THIS MATTER AND HOPE IT CAN BE SETTLED BEFORE THE PRE-ADVANCE TEAM ARRIVES PEKING. THE CHINESE WILL PROBABLY ASK FOR OUR OPINION ON THE TREATMENT OF CORRESPONDENTS BASED HERE IN THE EARLY DISCUSSIONS OF PRESS MATTERS. WE SHOULD HAVE AN AGREED POSITION TO PUT FORWARD.
BUSH

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